

VZCZCXR09862
PP RUEHLH RUEHPW
DE RUEHIL #1384 0920914
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 010914Z APR 08
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6233
INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 8374
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 7592
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 3048
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 9419
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE 5190
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR 3907
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHMFIS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL

UNCLAS ISLAMABAD 001384

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PGOV PREL EAID MASS PK
SUBJECT: FATA IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE FOR 03/28/08

REF: ISLAMABAD 1181

¶1. (U) Below is a summary of US Mission Islamabad's activities in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) along its northwest border with Afghanistan during the past two weeks up to March 28, 2008.

ODRP FATA Activities

¶2. (SBU) CCMR Contact Group:

The first Civil-Military Contact Group Program, carried out under the auspices of the Center for Civil-Military Relations (CCMR) of the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, took place in Peshawar on March 19 - 20. Participants were a mix of Pakistani military personnel and civilian bureaucrats, the latter drawn from the FATA Secretariat with the help of USAID capacity-building

SIPDIS

contractors to ensure a lively discussion. As one senior ODRP observer commented, the exercise was a case study in the need for the military to engage with the civilian bureaucracy in decision making. CCMR plans a second session with the same participants in Peshawar in May, and a third one in Monterey and Washington, DC, in July. ODRP rates the first program highly successful.

¶3. (SBU) SOCOM confirms work with Frontier Corps:

USSOCOM Commander Adm. Olson, during a visit to Warsak, outside Peshawar, confirmed the value of a sustained train and equip effort of the civil armed forces as a necessity for a long-term stability in the FATA.

¶4. (U) BCC Torkham Opens!

Ribbon cutting is set for March 29 for the Border Coordination Center at Torkham. BCCs represent a forum and a venue for the generation of coordinated action based on a common operating picture of Afghan, Pakistani, and ISAF elements.

USAID FATA Activities

¶5. (U) USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives' (OTI) has halted its work in Kurram Agency because of security threats

and has stopped in Orakzai since March 25 when fighting broke out between tribes. In Kurram, serious fighting between Sunnis and Shias killed five in a mid-day attack on an ambulance in Kurram on March 27. Kurram and Orakzai have long histories of sectarian fighting.

¶ 6. (U) OTI reports a far more positive development at Ekka Ghond Market in Mohmand Agency. On March 25, in a sign that OTI's efforts for open bidding practices on its projects are taking hold, there was a meeting to open bids for the market's sanitation system. The Project Oversight Committee (POC, made up of the Tehsildar, OTI staff, community members and the Assistant Political Agent) met with local contractors to review the contractors' bids. After opening the bids, it was clear the contractors had given inflated prices. The POC demanded the contractors return with more reasonable prices that reflected market rates. Even the Assistant Political Agent was visibly irritated at the contractors. This is an example of how the POC serves as an oversight mechanism in the project. It also demonstrates a new way of conducting transparent and accountable bidding that can serve as a model for the future.

¶ 7. (U) To see the in-depth results of an OTI-commissioned survey of perceptions of residents of several agencies within FATA, go to www.understandingfata.org.

BODDE